

eyes of astonishment, so plain and meagre were its contents, so unlike any dinner that had ever been served in that house.

"What has happened, my dear?" asked the gentleman, turning to his wife.

"Dat's all de col' meat dar was—sorry I didn't have no more," she said half apologetically.

"But I sent home a choice roast this mornin'," began Mr. Allyn, wonderingly; "and you have no potatoes, neither—nor vegetables of any kind!"

"Laws, yes! But den a body has to think about it a good while aforehand to get a roast cooked, an' just the same with taters; an' I thought I'd give ye what I happened to have when de time come, and I didn't happen to have much of nuffin. 'Clare! I forgo de bread?" and trotting away, she returned with a plate of cold corn cake.

"No bread!" murmured Mrs. Allyn.

"No, honey; used it all up for toast dis mornin'. Might of made biscuit or muffins, if I had planned for 'em long enough but dat kind o' makes a body feel's if dey had to do it, an' I wanted to get dinner for yer all o' my warm feelin's, when de time come."

"When a man has provided bountifully for his household, it seems as if he might expect to enjoy a small share of it himself, even if the preparation does require a little trouble," remarked Mr. Allyn, impatiently; but still too bewildered at such an unprecedented state of affairs to be thoroughly indignant.

"Cur'us how things make a body think o' Bible verses," said Thanksgiving, musingly. "Dar's dat one 'bout 'who giveth us all things richly to enjoy'; an' 'what shall I render to de Lord for all His benefits to 'ard me.' Dar! I didn't put on dem peaches."

"Has Thanksgiving suddenly lost her senses?" questioned the gentleman, as the door closed after her.

"I suspect there is a 'method in her madness,'" replied his wife, a faint smile crossing her lips.

The old woman returned with the basket, sadly despoiled of its morning contents; but she composedly bestowed the remainder in a fruit dish.

"Dat's all! De chilern eat a good many, an' dey was used up one way an' 'nother. I'se sorry dar aint no more; but I hope y'll 'joy what dar is, an' I wishes 'twas five times as much."

A look of sudden intelligence flashed into Mr. Allyn's eyes; he bit his lip for a moment, and then asked quietly:

"Couldn't you have laid aside some for us, Thanksgiving?"

"Wall, dar now! s'poe I could," said the old servant, relenting at the tone; "b'lieve I will next time. Allers kind o' thought de folks things belonged to had de best right to 'em; but I'd heard givin' whatever happened to be on hand was so much freer an' lovin'er a way o' serving dem ye love best, dat I thought I'd try it. But it does 'pear's if dey fared slim, an' I speets I'll go back to de ole plan o' systematics."

"Do you see, George?" questioned the wife when they were again alone.

"Yes, I see. An object lesson with a vengeance!"

"And if she should be right, and our careless giving seem anything like this?" pursued Mrs. Allyn, with a troubled face.

"She is right, Fanny; it doesn't take much argument to show that. We call Christ our King and Master; believe that every blessing we have in this world is his direct gift; and all our hopes for the world to come are in him. We profess to be not our own, but his;

to be journeying towards his royal city; and that his service is our chief business here; and yet, strangely enough, we provide lavishly for our own appareling, entertainment and ease, and apportion nothing for the interests of his kingdom, or the forwarding of his work; but leave that to any chance pence that may happen to be left after all our wants and fancies are gratified. It doesn't seem very like faithful or loving service," Mr. Allyn answered, gravely. "I have been thinking in that direction occasionally, lately, but have been too indolent, careless or selfish to come to a decision and make any change."

There was a long talk over that dinner table—indeed, it did not furnish opportunity for much other employment; and that afternoon the husband and wife together examined into their expenses and income, and set apart a certain portion as sacred unto their Lord—doing it somewhat after Thanksgiving's plan of "good measure." To do this, they found, required the giving up of some needless indulgences—a few accustomed luxuries. But a cause never grows less dear on account of the sacrifice we make for it, and as these two scanned the various fields of labor, in deciding what to bestow here and what there, they awoke to a new appreciation of the magnitude and glory of the work, and a new interest in its success—the beginning of that blessing pronounced upon those who "sow beside all waters."

Mrs. Allyn told Thanksgiving of their new arrangement, and concluded, laughingly, though the tears stood in her eyes:

"Ann, now I suppose you are satisfied?"

"I's 'mazing glad," said Thanksgiving, looking up brightly; "but satisfied—dat's a long, deep word; an' de Bible says it will be when we 'awake in his likeness.'"

"Wall, now, I don't perfer none o' these kind o' things," said Silas standing on one foot, and swinging the other, "but I don't mind telling ye that I think your way's right, an' I don't believe nobody ever lost nuthin' by what they give to God; cause He's pretty certain to pay it back with compound interest to them, you see; but I don't s'pose you'd call that a right good motive; would you?"

"Not de best, Silas; not de best; but it don't make folks love de Lord any de less, 'cause He's a good paymaster, and keeps His word. People dat starts in givin' to de Lord wid dat kind o' motives soon outgrows 'em—it soon gets to be payin', rad'er dan givin'."

"Wa-ll, ye see, folks don't always feel right," observed Silas, dropping dexterously on the other foot.

"No, they don't. When ebery body feels right, an' does right, dat'll be de millennium. But I's glad de faint streak of dat day dat's come to 'dis house!" And she went in, with her old song upon her lips:

"Thanksgivin' an' de voice of melody."

(Copies of this article in tract form may be secured free of cost from The Layman Co., 143 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill. The only condition is that those who receive them will try to get signatures to the America Tithers' Union. Send postage at the rate of 25 cents per hundred copies, and mention the Presbyterian of the South.)

Our Boys and Girls

MOTHER'S FINGER FAIRIES.

Gertrude wanted a new dress to wear to the party. Her mother shook her head discouragingly.

"It can't be managed," she said decisively. "Your old white one will have to do, I am afraid. We can't spare the money to get the cloth for another just now."

Gertrude pouted, and the tears came into her eyes. "I never have nice things like other girls," she cried bitterly. "I wish there were such things as fairies—that's what I wish."

Her mother glanced around the disordered room and sighed. "So do I," she answered. "I wish I had half a dozen of them to help me right now."

Gertrude glanced at her inquiringly. "Do fairies help grown people?" she asked. "I never read that they did."

"Yes, indeed," Mrs. Warren replied. "In Ireland the 'little people,' as the superstitious natives call them, are said to slip quite often into the houses unobserved and help with the work. But run out now, dear, and play."

Gertrude went slowly out into the yard and joined her brother and sister, who were playing rather listlessly in one corner. "Say," she said suddenly, "how would you two like to be faries?"

"Fairies?" Betty eyed her, puzzled.

"Yes, fairies," said Gertrude. "Mother was telling me that the people in Ireland believe that the fairies slip into the houses and help them with their work. Let's play that we are fairies and slip in and help mother when she doesn't know anything about it. There are lots of things that I know we could do."

"I could do all the mending," said Betty.

"I did once, but it wasn't much fun; so I quit. And I can sweep and make beds, too, only I'd rather play."

"So would mother, I guess," said Hal, "but she never has time with her sewing and keeping the house up, too. I wonder why she doesn't make us do more."

"I heard her tell Mrs. Moore once that it was harder to get us to do things than to do them herself," volunteered Betty, hanging her head a little.

"But it isn't too late to mend," put in Gertrude eagerly; "and if we do it this way, it will be really fun. I know mother is worrying over the way the kitchen looks, but she has to finish that dress for Mrs. Green, and she has to hurry. Let's slip in and clean it while she is sewing."

"All right," agreed Hal, jumping up, "I'm big; I'll mop the floor, and you girls can clean up the rest of the things."

"I know where there is some cheese-cloth that will make fresh curtains for the windows," cried Betty; "you know that stuff that was left from our cantata costumes? Well, I washed it the other day, and it will make lovely curtains. I'll stencil it with my crayons."

"You do that," said Gertrude, "while Hal and I attack the kitchen itself. I'll clean the shelves and polish the windows. But we must work quietly, as the sure-enough fairies do, so mother will not suspect."

Perhaps if the sewing machine had not been running so very rapidly their mother might have heard sounds from the kitchen and made haste to investigate, but the dress for Mrs. Green must be finished before night, and the children were very quiet. Hal heated water